

Palmetto Fellows Scholarship

2006-07 Academic Year

What is the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship?

The Palmetto Fellows Scholarship is a merit-based Scholarship administered by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education. The annual award amount for each Palmetto Fellow cannot exceed \$6,700 per academic year. Assuming continued eligibility, half of the Scholarship is awarded in the fall term and half in the spring term (or its equivalent). The Scholarship must be applied directly toward the cost of attendance, less any other gift aid received. Palmetto Fellows may be supported for a maximum of eight full-time terms of study toward the first bachelor's degree at a participating four-year institution in South Carolina.

The Purpose:

- RECOGNIZE the most academically talented high school seniors in S.C.;
- ENCOURAGE academically talented students to attend college in the State; and
- RETAIN talented minority students who might otherwise pursue studies outside the State.

Initial Eligibility Requirements:

- **For early awards**, students must submit applications to the Commission on Higher Education for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship by **December 15, 2006**. High school seniors may apply if they meet one of the following two academic requirements (students cannot use these criteria to meet the final award criteria):
 1. Score at least 1200 on the SAT (27 on the ACT)¹ by the November test administration, earn a minimum 3.50 cumulative GPA² on the SC Uniform Grading Scale (UGS) at the end of the junior year, and rank in the top six percent³ of the class at the end of either the sophomore or the junior year; or
 2. Score at least 1400 on the SAT (32 on the ACT)¹ by the November test administration and earn a minimum 4.00 cumulative GPA² on the SC UGS at the end of the junior year⁴.
- **For final awards**, students must submit applications to the Commission on Higher Education for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship by **June 15, 2007**. High school seniors may apply if they meet one of the following two academic requirements:
 1. Score at least 1200 on the SAT (27 on the ACT)¹ by the June national test administration of the senior year; earn a minimum 3.50 cumulative GPA² on the SC UGS at the end of the senior year, and rank in the top six percent³ of the class at the end of the senior year; or
 2. Score at least 1400 on the SAT (32 on the ACT)¹ by the June national test administration and earn a minimum 4.00 cumulative GPA² on the SC UGS at the end of the senior year⁴.

¹ See Question 1 for detailed information regarding the minimum SAT/ACT score requirements.

² GPAs must be reported to at least two decimal places and cannot be rounded.

³ Rank is calculated by multiplying the number in class by six percent. If the resulting percent is not a whole number, then round it up to the next whole number. For example, a class size of 185 students would include the top twelve students since 11.1 rounds up to twelve ($185 \times 6\% = 11.1$, rounded to the next whole number of 12).

⁴ Home school students who are unable to obtain rank verification and SC residents attending out-of-state high schools must use the second/alternative criteria in order to qualify for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship.

- In order to be eligible to apply for a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, a high school senior must
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also meet all of the following general eligibility requirements:

1. Be enrolled in an approved SC public or private high school, an approved SC home-school program of study or a preparatory high school located outside the State while a dependent of a legal resident of South Carolina;
2. Be a legal resident of South Carolina as defined in applicable State statutes governing the determination of residency for tuition and fee purposes;
3. Be a U.S. citizen or a legal permanent resident (who meets the definition of an eligible non-citizen under State residency statutes);
4. Be seriously considering attending, have applied, or have been accepted for admission to an eligible four-year institution in South Carolina;
5. Prove that he/she has never been convicted of any felonies and not been convicted of any alcohol or drug-related misdemeanor offenses within the past academic year by submitting a signed affidavit to the financial aid office at the institution at which the student is enrolled; and
6. Not be a recipient of the LIFE Scholarship, SC HOPE Scholarship or Lottery Tuition Assistance.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q.1 - How is the qualifying score on the SAT (and equivalent ACT score) determined?

The score on the SAT must be calculated by using the highest Math score combined with the highest Critical Reading score (formerly known as the Verbal score). Students cannot use the Writing subsection score to meet the minimum SAT score. Students may use either the SAT version prior to March 2005 and/or the new SAT to obtain the qualifying score. The score on the ACT is determined based on the composite score at one test sitting. For early awards, test scores will be accepted through the November test administration. For final awards, test scores will be accepted through the June national test administration of the senior year.

Q.2 - If I attend high school out-of-state, am I still eligible to apply?

Yes, students who attend out-of-state preparatory high schools may apply if they meet the 1400 SAT score (32 ACT score) and minimum 4.0 cumulative GPA on the SC Uniform Grading Scale. In order to meet the GPA requirement, the student may request that one of the officials designated by the Commission on Higher Education convert their grades to the SC UGS. The student must submit a completed "Scholarship Grade Conversion Form for South Carolina Residents Attending Out-of-state High Schools" along with test score verification to the Commission on Higher Education. These students must meet all other eligibility criteria, including South Carolina residency requirements. A preparatory high school is defined as a school recognized by the state in which the school is located to offer curricula through the twelfth grade and prepares students for college entrance.

Q.3 - If I homeschool, what criteria must I meet to be eligible to apply?



Homeschool students must meet all eligibility criteria, including rank in the top six percent of the class. Students must homeschool through a South Carolina approved homeschool association that ranks their members. The homeschool association must submit a ranking report on the association's letterhead that includes the class rank and GPA based on the SC Uniform Grading Scale for all homeschool students in that class. The homeschool association is responsible for submitting all required information by the established deadline. If a homeschool student cannot obtain rank verification, then the student may also qualify by scoring at least 1400 on the SAT (32 on ACT) and earning a minimum 4.0 cumulative GPA, without regard to rank. Students must meet all other eligibility criteria.

Q.4 - What is the application process?

The Commission on Higher Education mails application materials to all high schools and homeschool associations in the State during the fall of the student's senior year of high school. The Commission also provides a news release to all of the major newspapers within South Carolina regarding the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and application deadlines for the current graduating class. Students who are enrolled at an out-of-state high school are personally responsible for contacting the Commission about the application process and must adhere to the same deadlines.

The assistance of counselors is required to ensure that all eligible students are given the opportunity to apply by providing an application to the student for completion. Application materials must be submitted to the Commission on Higher Education by the established deadlines. **The early award deadline is December 15, 2006, and the final award deadline is June 15, 2007, of the student's senior year.** Please contact your high school counselor for additional information or to complete an application.

Q.5 - How do I qualify if I attend a high school with a small class size (less than twenty students)?

The top two students shall be considered regardless of whether they rank in the top six percent of their class if they also scored at least 1200 on the SAT/27 on the ACT and earned a minimum 3.5 cumulative GPA. If a student does not rank number one or number two in the class, he/she may also qualify by scoring at least 1400 on the SAT (32 on the ACT) and earning a minimum 4.0 cumulative GPA, without regard to rank. Students must meet all other eligibility criteria.

Q.6 - After submitting the application, when should I expect to be notified about the status of my application?

For those students who meet the early award deadline in December, award notifications for recipients of the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship are usually sent during February of the student's senior year of high school. For those students who meet the final award deadline in June, award notifications for recipients of the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship are usually sent during July of the



student's senior year of high school. **Students must return the Scholarship acceptance form to the Commission on Higher Education by the established date or forfeit the Scholarship.** Students must accept the Scholarship with both the Commission on Higher Education and the institutional financial aid office of the institution they plan to attend.

Q.7 - Once I have been awarded the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, am I required to enroll in college right away?

Students selected as Palmetto Fellows must enter an eligible four-year institution the fall term immediately following high school graduation. The award may not be deferred.

Q.8 - If my academic major is not offered in South Carolina, can I take the Palmetto Fellow Scholarship to an out-of-state institution?

No, students selected as Palmetto Fellows must enroll in an eligible South Carolina institution even if the student's major is not offered within the State. However, you may be eligible for the Academic Common Market. Additional information regarding this program is available at the following Web site: http://www.che.sc.gov/AcademicAffairs/ACM_Information.htm

Q.9 – Am I eligible for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship if I attend an out-of-state four-year institution and then transfer back to an eligible four-year institution in South Carolina?

You may be eligible to reapply for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship if you declined the Scholarship when it was offered to you by the Commission on Higher Education during your senior year of high school. You will be required to earn at least thirty credit hours and a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA by the end of each academic year (or its equivalent) of college enrollment. The number of terms you attended college after high school graduation will be deducted from the eight terms of Scholarship eligibility. The first step in determining your eligibility for any remaining terms under the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Program is to complete the reapplication form available online at <http://www.che.sc.gov/StudentServices/PalmettoFellows/files/200506ReapplicationForm.pdf>

Q.10 - May I qualify for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship if I complete my high school graduation requirements a semester early (December graduates)?

For students who graduate mid-year, you are eligible to apply and be awarded the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship during your senior year. However, the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship cannot initiate until the following fall term. If you plan to enroll in college during the spring term, you may be eligible for the LIFE Scholarship for the spring term by completing an Early Graduation Application available on the Commission's Web site at

<http://www.che.sc.gov/StudentServices/LIFE/Early%20Graduation%20Form%202.doc>

The form must be submitted to CHE for approval. If you are subsequently awarded the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, you would then be eligible to receive funding under that program beginning



with the fall term.

Q.11 - Once I have been awarded a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, are there specific criteria I must meet in order to retain eligibility?

You are not required to reapply for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship each academic year. As long as you meet the following continued eligibility requirements by the end of each academic year, the institutional financial aid office may renew your Scholarship for up to three years:

- Enroll full-time at the time of the Scholarship disbursement;
- Earn at least a cumulative 3.0 GPA for graduation purposes by the end of each academic year;
- Earn a minimum of thirty credit hours for graduation purposes by the end of the academic year (**fall, spring and summer terms**). Exempted credit hours (i.e., AP, CLEP), credit hours earned before high school graduation (i.e., dual enrollment credit hours), and credit hours earned the summer term immediately following high school graduation cannot be used to meet the annual credit-hour requirement;
- Maintain South Carolina residency as defined in applicable State statutes governing the determination of residency for tuition and fee purposes;
- Not owe a refund or repayment on a State Grant, Pell Grant or a Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and not be in default on a loan under the Federal Perkins Loan or Federal Stafford Loan program by submitting a signed affidavit to the financial aid office at the institution at which the student is enrolled;
- Prove that he/she has never been convicted of any felonies and has not been convicted of any alcohol/drug-related misdemeanor offenses within the past academic year by submitting a signed affidavit to the financial aid office at the institution at which the student is enrolled; and
- Complete any other documentation required by the financial aid office at which he or she is enrolled.

Q.12 - May I use exempted credit hours earned through AP/CLEP, college credit hours earned prior to high school graduation, or credit hours earned the summer term immediately following high school graduation toward the annual credit hour requirement?

Any credit hours earned the summer term immediately following high school graduation, before high school graduation, hours exempted by examination, or advanced placement credit hours cannot be used to meet the annual credit hour requirement.



Q.13 - May I use audit or duplicate courses toward the annual credit hour requirement?

No, audit and duplicate courses generally do not earn credit hours. However, please check with your institution to determine their policies.

Q.14 - What happens if I have been convicted of an alcohol or other drug-related misdemeanor offense?

Students who have been adjudicated delinquent or have been convicted or pled guilty or *nolo contendere* to any alcohol or other drug-related misdemeanor offense are ineligible for the Scholarship for one academic year after the adjudication, conviction, or plea occurred. The student will lose Scholarship eligibility the next academic year (fall and spring terms) immediately following conviction.

Q.15 - How do I renew my Palmetto Fellows Scholarship if I qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973?

Students who qualify under the ADA must register with the institution's Disability Services Office. The institutional Disability Services Provider must provide written documentation to the Office of Financial Aid prior to each academic year verifying that the student is approved to be enrolled in less than full-time status or earn less than the required annual credit hours. In order to renew the Scholarship each academic year, the student must complete the required number of hours approved by the institutional Disability Services Provider and earn a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA for graduation purposes.

Q.16 - What happens if my GPA falls below a cumulative 3.0 or if I don't meet the thirty credit hour requirement by the end of the academic year?

If the continued eligibility requirements are not maintained, you forfeit continued participation in the program and your Scholarship will be discontinued. However, if a legitimate extenuating circumstance caused you to lose eligibility, you may submit an appeal to have your Scholarship reinstated. Applications for appeal may be obtained from the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Coordinator at your college financial aid office, the Commission on Higher Education, or online at <http://www.che.sc.gov/StudentServices/Appeals/AppealsHm.htm>

Q.17 - If I need to drop a class, will I automatically lose the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship?

No, as long as you are enrolled full-time at the time of scholarship disbursement, you have until the end of the academic year (including summer school) to complete the required thirty credit hours. If you have any questions about your continued participation in the program, please contact the



Commission on Higher Education or the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Coordinator at your institution's financial aid office.

Q.18 - Can I use my Palmetto Fellows Scholarship to study abroad, co-op or to participate in an internship or an exchange program?

Yes, you are eligible to receive scholarship funds, if the internship, cooperative work program, travel study program, or National or International Student Exchange program **is an approved program of study by your college and is accepted as full-time transfer credit**. Please contact the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Coordinator in the financial aid office at your college for further information.

Q.19 - What must I do to transfer my Palmetto Fellows Scholarship from one eligible institution to another?

You will need to complete the Transfer Form, which is available online at http://www.che.sc.gov/StudentServices/PalmettoFellows/PFS_TRANSFER_FORM.htm. All transfers must receive prior approval from the Commission on Higher Education. You should be aware that Palmetto Fellows cannot receive funding for more than eight terms and all continued eligibility requirements must be maintained.

Q.20 - If I graduate early (before I utilize eight terms of Palmetto Fellows Scholarship funding), can I use the remaining terms of funding toward another bachelor's degree or graduate degree?

No, in the event of early graduation, the award is discontinued according to the regulation. Additionally, the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship cannot be applied to a second bachelor's degree or to graduate coursework.

Q.21 - Can I receive both the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and the LIFE/SC HOPE Scholarship at the same time?

No, according to State law, if you are receiving a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, you cannot receive a LIFE and/or SC HOPE Scholarship at the same time. However, if you lose your Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, you may be eligible to receive the LIFE Scholarship.

Q.22 - If I am a Palmetto Fellow, am I eligible to receive Lottery Tuition Assistance during the summer of the same academic year?

No, according to State law, if you are receiving a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, you cannot receive Lottery Tuition Assistance during the same academic year. For example, if you are awarded the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship during the fall and spring terms, then you are not eligible to receive Lottery Tuition Assistance during the summer term at a technical college or two-year institution.



Q.23 - Can I earn the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship once I have started college?

No, the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship must be awarded during the senior year of high school. However, the LIFE Scholarship may be earned while in college.

For more information about the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, please contact:

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Please note that the information provided is subject to change.

